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PAGE 01 STATE 176626
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TAGS: EAGR, EAID, ETRD, PDIP, SHUM

SUBJECT: ARA WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS, JULY 5-11

1. AMBASSADOR VAKY'S CONFIRMATION HEARING - AMBASSADOR VAKY APPEARED BEFORE THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE JULY 11 AS NOMINEE FOR ARA ASSISTANT SECRETARY. QUESTIONING BY CHAIRMAN SPARKMAN AND SENATOR CASE WAS ROUTINE. THE SENATE IS EXPECTED TO ACT ON THE COMMITTEE'S FAVORABLE RECOMMENDATION WITHIN A FEW DAYS.

2. OPPOSITION LEADER ARRESTED IN PARAGUAY AFTER VISIT TO U.S. - DOMINGO LAINO, A LEADER OF THE RADICAL LIBERAL OPPOSITION PARTY WAS ARRESTED IN PARAGUAY ON JULY 7 THE
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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 176626

DAY AFTER RETURNING FROM A SIX-WEEK VISIT TO THE U.S. HIS VISIT WAS SPONSORED BY THE WASHINGTON OFFICE FOR LATIN AMERICA, A PRIVATE HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATION WITH CHURCH AFFILIATION- LAINO MET WITH DEPUTY SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER AND OTHER DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS. HE ALSO ATTENDED THE OASGA WITH REPORTERS CREDENTIALS FROM OPPOSITION NEWSPAPERS IN PARAGUAY AND PROVIDED DOCUMENTATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

ABUSES IN HIS COUNTRY TO THE VENEZUELAN DELEGATION. IN A PUBLIC LUNCHEON SPONSORED BY WOLA, AND IN A SEPARATE PRESS CONFERENCE, LAINO CALLED FOR THE U.S. TO TERMINATE

ASSISTANCE TO THE "STROESSNER DICTATORSHIP." IN WHAT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN AN ATTEMPT TO RETALIATE FOR HIS ACTIVITIES IN THE U.S., LAINO WAS PICKED UP BY PLAIN CLOTHES OFFICERS AND HELD INCOMMUNICADO OVER THE WEEKEND. AFTER REPRESENTATIONS BY AMBASSADOR WHITE, THE GOP ACKNOWLEDGED HIS ARREST AND PERMITTED HIS WIFE TO SEE HIM VERY BRIEFLY. THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT HE MAY BE TRIED FOR AN OBSCURE 1974 POLITICAL CONSPIRACY CHARGE, BUT THE INTENSE INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE HIS ARREST HAS GENERATED MAY ALSO RESULT IN HIS RELEASE. WE VOLUNTEERED A STRONG STATEMENT AT THE NOON BRIEFING ON JULY 11 CALLING THE INCIDENT UNFORTUNATE AND EXPRESSING CONCERN. OTHER ACTIONS WE MIGHT TAKE ARE UNDER REVIEW.

3. MTN: FOCUS ON LATIN AMERICAN INTERESTS - WITH THE MTN NEGOTIATIONS APPROACHING THE JULY 15 DEADLINE

FOR AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE, WE HAVE BEEN FOCUSING ON GETTING THE MAXIMUM PARTICIPATION BY ARA COUNTRIES AS WELL AS CONSIDERATION FOR LDC INTERESTS. NOT SURPRISINGLY, THE U.S. AND OTHER MAJOR TRADING COUNTRIES ARE CONCENTRATING ON REACHING A SATISFACTORY CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 176626

DEAL AMONG THEMSELVES, BUT WE HAVE BOTH POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REASONS FOR WANTING THE LATINOS TO PARTICIPATE. IF THEY ARE NOT INVOLVED, WE CAN EXPECT CONFRONTATION AND RECRIMINATION--NOT UNLIKELY IN ANY EVENT--OVER THE RESULTS. AFTER A LOT OF FOOT DRAGGING AND POSTURING, MOST ARA COUNTRIES ARE NOW ENGAGED IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. MEXICO IS THE EXCEPTION BUT THEY SAY THEY WILL MAKE AN OFFER BY THE END OF THE WEEK.

4. DARIEN GAP HIGHWAY IN PANAMA - HOUSE-SENATE CONFEREES HAVE DELETED THE \$20 MILLION FY 1979 APPROPRIATION FOR THE DARIEN GAP HIGHWAY IN PANAMA. IN THAT LIGHT, HOPE HAS FADED FOR FAVORABLE CONGRESSIONAL VOTES ON A \$20 MILLION SUPPLEMENTAL REQUEST FOR FY 1978, ON WHICH THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE WILL VOTE ON JULY 20. THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION AND STATE HAVE PREPARED LETTERS FOR PRESIDENTIAL SIGNATURE URGING INFLUENTIAL LEGISLATORS TO SUPPORT THE FY 78 SUPPLEMENTAL.

5. AFRICAN SWINE FEVER MEETING - AN EMERGENCY TECHNICAL CONSULTATION ON AFRICAN SWINE FEVER WILL

BE HELD IN LIMA, JULY 13-14, UNDER FAO AUSPICES. USDA WILL PARTICIPATE, ALONG WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM SEVERAL LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES TO DISCUSS MEANS FOR CONTROLLING THE DISEASE, WHICH DOES NOT THREATEN HUMANS, BUT WHICH CAN DECIMATE SWINE POPULATIONS. TO DATE, ONLY BRAZIL AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC HAVE CONFIRMED OUTBREAKS OF THE DISEASE.

6. THE OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY: PROGRESS ON HUMAN RIGHTS, ARMS RESTRAINT

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HELD JUNE 21-JULY 1 WAS GENERAL-
LY SUCCESSFUL, IN PART BECAUSE OF AN UNUSUALLY EASY
FORMAL AGENDA. THE RESULTS CONSOLIDATED THE CONSIDERABLE
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PAGE 04 STATE 176626

PROGRESS ON HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PAST 18 MONTHS. PUBLIC
CONFRONTATIONS ON REGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION WERE AVER-
TED. DESPITE SOME NOTABLE INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCES AND
STATEMENTS, HOWEVER, THE ASSEMBLY DID LITTLE TO RESOLVE
THE OAS'S ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEMS OR TO CLARIFY ITS ROLE
IN ADDRESSING THE HEMISPHERE'S VARIED MULTILATERAL PROB-
LEMS OR TO CLARIFY ITS ROLE IN ADDRESSING THE HEMISPHERE'S

VARIED MULTILATERAL PROBLEMS OTHER THAN HUMAN RIGHTS.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

-- THE MAJORITY IN FAVOR OF HUMAN RIGHTS WHICH EMERGED
AT GRENADA LAST YEAR WAS SOLIDIFIED, AND IT WAS CLEAR THAT
THE LEGITIMACY OF INTERNATIONAL CONCERN IS NO LONGER SER-
IOUSLY QUESTIONED. AS A CONSEQUENCE, SOME REAL PROGRESS
WAS MADE TOWARD STRENGTHENING MULTILATERAL HUMAN RIGHTS
MACHINERY, BOTH IN TERMS OF THE INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN
RIGHTS COMMISSION, AND OF THE AMERICAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN
RIGHTS, PERU'S COMMITMENT TO RATIFY THE CONVENTION THIS
MONTH MEANS IT WILL NOW COME INTO FORCE FOR ITS ELEVEN
DEPOSITORY COUNTRIES (BUT NOT THE UNITED STATES).

-- AGREEMENT WAS REACHED TO FIND A FORMULA TO REDUCE
OUR PERCENTAGE SHARE OF THE REGULAR BUDGET AND THE PERMA-
NENT COUNCIL IS INSTRUCTED TO PRESENT A FORMULA FOR CONSID-
ERATION AT A SPECIAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY WHICH WILL CONVENE
LATE THIS YEAR TO APPROVE THE OAS' 1979 BUDGET.

-- INTEREST WAS EXPRESSED AT THE OASGA IN THE ISSUE OF
CONVENTIONAL ARMS RESTRAINT, WHICH WAS GIVEN A MAJOR IM-
PULSE BY PRESIDENT CARTER'S OPENING SPEECH, BY THE DECLAR-
ATION (AT VENEZUELAN INITIATIVE) OF THE AYACUCHO FOREIGN
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 05 STATE 176626

MINISTERS TO REVIVE SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS FOR A REGIONAL ACCORD, AND BY THE EMERGENCE OF A PARALLEL INITIATIVE BY MEXICO. HOWEVER, THUS FAR THE ARMS RESTRAINT TALKS THEMSELVES ARE OCCURRING OUTSIDE OF THE OAS STRUCTURE AS SUCH.

ON THE LESS POSITIVE SIDE, OUR EFFORT WITH MEXICO TO REVIVE THE PROCESS OF OAS RESTRUCTURING THROUGH THE FORMATION OF A SMALL, HIGH-LEVEL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE WAS BLOCKED BY SMALL COUNTRIES FEARFUL OF BEING EXCLUDED FROM THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS AND BY LONG-TERM OAS REPRESENTATIVES WHO DID NOT WANT TO SEE THEIR YEARS OF WORK ON "CHARTER REFORM" LOST. IN ITS PLACE, THE PERMANENT COUNCIL IS REQUESTED TO REVIVE ITS OAS REFORM EFFORTS, INCLUDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN APPROPRIATE NEGOTIATING MECHANISM.

THE REFORM EFFORT THUS CONTINUES TO BE STYMIED-BY THE HEMISPHERE'S DIFFICULT "HIDDEN AGENDA", DOMINATED BY DIFFERENT PERCEPTIONS OF THE ORGANIZATION'S MAJOR GOALS. WHILE OUR INTERESTS ARE CHIEFLY POLITICAL, MOST LATIN AMERICANS SEE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOTH AS A US CHARTER COMMITMENT AND AS A NECESSARY COMPLEMENT TO THE ADMINISTRATION'S ACTIVE SUPPORT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND PEACEKEEPING.

OUTLOOK:

WE BELIEVE THE OAS WILL BE ABLE TO MAKE A MORE DIRECT CONTRIBUTION TO THESE AND OTHER MULTILATERAL ISSUES IF BROADER AGREEMENT CAN BE REACHED ON THE OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES TO BE ACCORDED TO THEM--EVEN WITHOUT A CONSENSUS ON ULTIMATE PURPOSES. DECIDING WHICH ISSUE OR COMBINATION OF ISSUES--HUMAN RIGHTS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ARMS RESTRAINT OR PEACEKEEPING,--SHOULD BE GIVEN PRIORITY ATTENTION WOULD PROBABLY NOT OVERCOME THE BASIC DIVERGENCIES THAT EXIST WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION, BUT MIGHT PROVIDE A MORE POSITIVE FOCUS FOR PRACTICAL WORK. WE

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PAGE 06 STATE 176626

WILL BE WORKING CLOSELY WITH SECRETARY GENERAL ORFILA AND INTERESTED GOVERNMENTS TO INVOLVE THE OAS MORE FULLY ON THESE BROADER ISSUES IN THE MONTHS AHEAD.

7. U.S. AMBASSADOR NEW CHAIRMAN OF OAS COUNCIL
(UNCLASSIFIED)

ON JULY 5, AMBASSADOR GALE MC GEE, U.S. REPRESENT-
ATIVE IN THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES, ASSUMED
THE CHAIR OF THE OAS PERMANENT COUNCIL. THE UNITED
STATES LAST OCCUPIED THAT POSITION IN 1972. CHRISTOPHER

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